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## The Metamorphosis of Plants.

TRANSLATION FROM GOETHE.

Thou perplexed, Beloved, the intertangled confusion  
Of this flowery throng, which in the garden thou  
seest;  
Many the names you must hear, and ever one after  
another  
With its barbarous clang crowds itself into your  
ear.  
All in their forms are kindred, and yet no one like  
another;  
So this wonderful choir points to a half-hidden  
law,—  
Yes, to a holy enigma. O, could I teach thee, Be-  
loved,  
Happily teach thee the word, that will unriddle  
it all!  
Study it now as it grows, and see how the plant,  
ever changing,  
Step by step carried up, forms into blossoms and  
fruit.  
Out of the seed it unfolds itself, so soon as the  
fruitful  
Earth's still fostering lap letteth it forth into life,  
And to the soft wooing light, the holy, eternally  
moving.  
Quick the opening leaves' delicate structure com-  
mits.  
Singly slept the germ in the seed; an embryo fore-  
type  
Lay, enwrapped in itself, curling up under the  
shell;  
Leaf, and root, and bud, half-formed, and all with-  
out color;  
Thus the kernel so dry safely protects the still  
life;  
Then it flows strivingly upwards, trusting the deli-  
cate moisture,  
And soon lifteth itself out of its mantle of night.  
But what shows itself first is ever a simple for-  
mation;  
Thus may we among plants always distinguish  
the child.  
Soon a following impulse lifts itself upward repeat-  
ing,  
Joint upon joint built up, still the earliest form;  
Yet not always the same; for, constantly changing  
its figure,  
Opens out, as you see, ever the following leaf,  
More spread out and indented, and cut into points  
and divisions,  
Which, half-grown, heretofore slept in the organ  
below  
And so reaches it first its highest determined com-  
pletion,  
Which in many a tribe thee to astonishment  
moves.  
Variously ribbed and jagged, on the juicy, exuber-  
ant surface  
Seems the fulness of life free and unbounded to  
be.  
But here Nature holds, with powerful hands, the  
formation  
Back, and to perfecter shape softly inclines it to  
grow.  
Now more sparingly leads she the sap through slender  
vessels,  
And the delicate plant's finer formations begin.  
Now the forth-putting edges draw themselves qui-  
etly backward,  
While the rib of the stalk builds itself solidly out.  
Leafless, however, and swift, upsprings the delicate  
flower-stem,  
And a miraculous sight fills the beholder with  
joy.  
Round in a circle there place them, in number ex-  
act or uncounted,  
Leaflets, the smallest one first, next to that liketh  
itself.  
Gathered close round the axle, now opens the shel-  
tering calyx,  
And to full beauty and height lets out the gay-  
colored crown.  
So shines Nature complete in all her fulness of glo-  
ry,

As, in regular rise, limb upon limb she displays.  
Ever thou marvell'st anew, so soon as the stem, with  
its blossom,  
Over the changing leaves' delicate scaffolding  
rocks.  
But this beauteous show now a new creation an-  
nounces;  
Yes, the soft-colored leaf feelth the hand of the  
God,  
And together draws itself quick: the tenderest  
forms now  
Lean together in pairs, seemingly made to unite.  
Lovingly now they stand, the beautiful couples, to-  
gether:  
See, in numerous crowd, ranged round the altar,  
they wait!  
Hymen hovers this way, and streams of exquisite  
odors,  
Borne on the generous breeze, breathe a new life  
all around.  
Now distinctly swell at once the germs without  
number,  
Germs of the swelling fruit, soft in the motherly  
lap.  
And here Nature concludes the ring of her infinite  
powers;  
Yet a new one at once links itself on to the last.  
That, unbroken, the chain through endless time  
may be lengthened,  
And the whole made alive, like the one part we  
have seen.  
Turn thee now, my Beloved, and look at the motley  
confusion:  
Now, no longer perplexed, you may look on as it  
waves.  
Every plant but announces to thee some law ever  
lasting;  
Every blossom, it speaks plainer and plainer to  
thee.  
If thou decipherest here the holy writ of the God-  
dess,  
Everywhere witness the same, though in a dif-  
ferent form.  
Creeping, loiter the grub, the butterfly busily hasten,  
Man keep moulding himself, changing his natural  
form!  
O, bethink thee then too, how, out of the germ of  
acquaintance,  
Day by day between us mutual interest grew;  
How, in the depth of our hearts, Friendship re-  
vealed its full power;  
And how Love came last, bringing the blossoms  
and fruits.  
Think, what manifold hues and shapes, now this,  
now another,  
Nature in quiet unfolds, and to our feelings im-  
parts.  
Now enjoy thyself fully to-day! for holy affection  
Strives for its highest fruit, strives for congenial  
tastes,  
Similar views of all things; that, through harmo-  
nious insight  
Firmly united, the pair thus the true heaven may  
find.

J. S. D.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR. This beautiful elegy was written in 1797. But it is merely one of the lighter fruits of what was a long and severe study of Nature with Goethe. By the same name he denominated his peculiar theory of vegetation, which appears to have occupied him particularly during his two visits in Italy, between 1786 and 1790; and his letters from there are full of dark hints about the *Urpflanze*, (Arch-Plant), which he thought he had discovered. In a letter to Herder he says:

"I must moreover tell you in confidence, that I am very near the whole secret of the generation and organization of plants, and that it is the simplest thing that can be imagined. Under this sky one may make the most beautiful observations. The main point—where the germ really lodges—I have discovered beyond all doubt; all the rest I have a general view of, only some points must be more distinctly made out. The Archetypal Plant (*Urpflanze*) will be the strangest creature in the world, which Nature herself shall envy me. With this model, and the key to it, one may then invent plants, *ad infinitum*, which must be consistent; i.e. which, if they do not exist, yet might exist, and are not mere pictur-

esque shows and shadows, but have an inward truth and necessity. The same law will be applicable to all animated bodies."—*Goethe and his Contemporaries*, Vol. I. p. 172.

From the same work it appears that this theory of Goethe's met with little attention among scientific men, but was rather regarded by them as a *poésie manquée*. An interesting observation, too, with regard to Goethe's self-discipline and habits of action, is there traced through his life, and verified by numerous instances; namely, this: that in times of grief and trouble he lost himself in the study of Nature, and exercised his creative genius only in his calmer, sunnier moods.

## Musical Degrees.

(From the Concordia, (London).)

The subject of musical degrees has for some time past received considerable attention, and is now discussed with an approach to warmth in particular quarters. It once occupied Handel's mind, but not for long. Somebody, or bodies, having suggested that the great man should go to Oxford and be made a Doctor, he put the matter aside in his usual unceremonious fashion, saying, in effect: "It is all very well for fools to be Doctors; what good could the title do me?" Handel, perhaps, had not studied the question, but his instinctive reply was very nearly an expression of its true philosophy. As a matter of fact, it may be said of degrees generally, that their testimony to a man's real powers is far from being of a positive character. They show that he has done certain things to the satisfaction of other men, but the acts performed and the mode of their achievement, however cunningly adapted to the end in view, are an imperfect test. An Oxford student may cram for a degree and win it, but be no more what the title strictly implies than his college cook. In the same manner, Sawbones, late of Guy's, may be admitted a M.R.C.S., and go down into the country to kill off his patients through recklessness or nervousness with painful consistency. But it will be urged that the testimony afforded by a degree, though necessarily imperfect, has yet some worth, and supplies a means of protection against ignorance and charlatanry. To a considerable extent this is no doubt true; and, though most of us have met with stupidity and quackery under the gown and hood, in so far as those badges of honor are a guarantee of acquirement, they serve a useful purpose which no sensible man would seek to depreciate. But if there be one case wherein such distinctions have less value than in another, music is that case. We will try to prove what we say.

Setting music aside, degrees, in their highest conceivable form, are but proof of work done within the field of knowledge. That field is open to all. Give the required advantages to any man of average intellect and he may, if he choose, become a Master of Arts, a Doctor of Medicine or a Bachelor of Science. Indeed, it is hardly necessary to stipulate for average intellect, seeing what precious specimens of the thinking animal sometimes contrive to win the favor of examiners. But, in the least promising case, so much reading and study will confer the necessary qualifications, and enable the mere plodder to say to the quick man, who has distanced him by years: "I have as good a right to put on the badge of my rank as you." But the case of music is different, for the simple and sufficient reason that music is not merely an affair of knowledge. In other words, book-learning cannot make a musician, and a man may as well seek, by tak-

ing thought, to add a cubit to his stature, as to win that dignity through such means. Is there any need to stop and prove this? Perhaps so, for nothing can be more astonishing than the curiously mistaken notions even musical people entertain about their art. Let us, therefore, pause to ask whether it may not be assumed that Schubert, the composer of the unfinished Symphony in B minor, of the A minor Quartet, and of the Entr'actes in *Rosamunde*, was a musician? Yet we very well know that had it been possible for Schubert, when he wrote those immortal works, to have gone before Professor Ouseley at Oxford, or Professor Macfarren at Cambridge, for a Doctor's degree, he would have been "plucked" without hesitation. Schubert had the highest attributes of a musician—attributes incommunicable and not to be acquired—without those of a lower, if admittedly valuable nature which come by study. How many of our masters were, to some extent, in like case? The story is told of a certain learned professor, still living and grubbing among musical "roots," that once on a time he pointed out to the composer himself what he thought to be a doubtful chord in a work by Mendelssohn. "What is the root of that chord?" asked the learned Professor. "Upon my word, Dr. —," answered the great man, "I don't know. It suited my purpose, and I used it." Precisely. Many other great men in music have done the same, and the world has been none the wiser; or, being the wiser, has esteemed them none the less. But if a man may be a musician without the ability to satisfy a University professor, the converse is also true, and he may "pass" with honors without being, in the highest sense, a musician at all. Dissenters of the old-fashioned type are said to value at extremely little worth the sermons of preachers with a "handle" to their names. The new-fangled B.A.'s and M.A.'s of the London University are objects of suspicion; but from a D.D. they fly as though the initials meant "Double Dryness." Hardly in like measure, perhaps, but still in some measure, the musical public look dubiously upon the efforts of Mus. Bac's and Mus. Doc's. *Prima facie*, those efforts ought to be regarded as the highest exemplification of musicianship amongst us. But facts can easily conquer the best arranged theory, and, to put the case with mildness, nobody thinks of giving more attention to the work of a man who wears the honors of Oxford or Cambridge, than to the production of a composer whose name speaks with the "unadorned eloquence" of a parish register. The justification of this is seen in the fact that most of our leading English musicians have been, and are, innocent of degrees. Taking those of recent, or contemporary date, it may be pointed out that both Sir Sterndale Bennett and Mr. Macfarren became Doctors because they became Doctor makers. Apart from such exceptional cases, do Henry Smart and Arthur Sullivan, taking each as representative of a generation, wear musical honors? We cannot, even by an effort, associate them with such things in the sense of bringing together that which is necessary to completeness. Again, it may pertinently be asked, what exercise written for a degree, and presumably, therefore, exhibiting the writer's highest endowments, has lived to serve more than a temporary purpose? One such there is, truly, but when Haydn composed the "Oxford" symphony it was not to satisfy an examiner, but to honor a university. Apart from this, candidates have covered reams of paper which an unappreciative world has allowed to line trunks or go to the buttermilk.

The foregoing remarks must not be misunderstood. We have nothing to say against musical degrees within the scope of their usefulness, and if a man thinks that his professional status will be bettered by writing Mus. Bac. or Mus. Doc. after his name, let him win and wear the honor. But we would jealously guard against the danger, which seems imminent, of a belief that degrees are a measure and

guarantee of musicianship. They are not, and they cannot be,—a fact which the more discerning Germans appear to have all along recognized. There are no Doctors of Music in the land of the great masters, because musicians, like poets, are born and not in any essential respect a creation of universities. Why, then, make a pother about degrees here? unless, indeed; there be a desire in some quarters to incorporate the musical profession and compel every man practising it to take out a diploma. Such an object is intelligible enough, but we are happy to believe that it is also impracticable. In the days of the Stuarts, Nicholas Lanier and others tried to shut the doors of the profession against all uncertified men, but the attempt, though backed by Royal authority, was a miserable failure. Since then music has been free to all, and free it must remain, as well from motives of policy as from the nature of the case. Quacks may arise, but they will sooner or later be found out and punished, unless they get themselves dubbed "doctors," in which case they may die in the odor of professional sanctity. As for those who are not quacks, they need no titular distinction now, and it will be a sorry time for music if they ever do.

### On the Relation of Musical Artists to their Art.

BY JOSEPH BENNETT.

"For none of us liveth or dieth to himself."—ST. PAUL.

The great epistolary formulates an obvious truth in the words I have placed at the head of this paper. It is not possible for any one of us, even though he imitate St. Simon Stylites, and dwell on the top of a pillar, to live or die to himself. The bond of a common nature is too strong; the dependence of man on man too deep-seated in its causes; and the links that bind him to his fellows are too many for severance. But the words may be taken as expressing an obligation, in so far, at least, as they refer to life. No man can live unto himself; every man ought to live unto something that is not only outside himself, but stimulative of noble thoughts, unselfish feeling, and beneficent deeds. \* \* \* \* \*

The physician lives for humanity, not for his fee, though he is worthy of it; and the servants of "god-like charity" do more than serve themselves. But what of the followers of Art? Are they among the classes privileged to "buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market?" or have they placed themselves in any degree under obligations superior to the demands of self? If any artist should so far get through my preamble as to reach this point, the question will probably amuse him. He may treat it as a whimsical speculation indulged in for the sake of discussion, like the theses of the ancient schoolmen. Or he may regard it as springing from one of those impracticable minds which apply the conditions of perfection to a most imperfect world. Let me hasten to assure and, perhaps, to astonish him by saying that I am serious in propounding the question, and mean to be very earnest in giving it an answer. First of all, however, I must limit the application of the word "artist" to those who follow the musical profession, not only because it is with them I have avowedly to deal, but because, otherwise, injustice might be done. A multitude of circumstances combine to separate musical artists from their fellows, and to place them under conditions of special trial. The painter lives and works in the privacy of his studio, the poet worships the muse in the seclusion of his library, and in each case everything tends to encourage that spirit of devotion which sinks the man in the minister of a noble and beneficent power. What great deeds and mighty sacrifices have the studio and the library witnessed, and how men have there learned to "scorn delight and live laborious days" while an easy road to a nearer reward lay before them! But the musical artist is tried as

are not other men. He labors at his vocation in the full glare of day, with all the world looking on. His success or failure at any given moment depends upon a hundred chances which he must be quick to seize. His life is a struggle with rivals who are ready to profit by any slip he makes, and he is to no small extent dependent upon an ignorant public liable to be influenced by equally ignorant, perhaps malevolent guides. These are not the conditions which foster a true artistic spirit. They are the conditions, rather, which beget selfishness, make personal advantage the be-all and end-all of life, and tend to measure success by encores and guineas. What wonder, then, if musical artists bear, as artists, an indifferent name. What wonder if they are associated, as a rule, with much that is unworthy of the dignity of their calling, and are too often credited with bringing to the discharge of its duties the spirit of a hucksterer! Where there is smoke there is fire, and the facts just stated make it the imperative duty of all who can reach the persons concerned to hold up the ideal of artistic life, and to insist upon the binding power of obligations which are so liable to be overlooked.

But here the artist may interpose, and resent as an impertinence this intrusion upon the conduct of his business. "Why," he may ask, "should I be lectured into what you choose to consider good behavior? Leave me to manage my affairs and attend you to your own." With regard to the last clause in this protest, that is precisely what I am doing. As between man and man I have no right at all to speak; as between an artist and an amateur of art the matter is one which concerns me—is my business, in point of fact. You cannot see this, because it has not yet dawned upon you that you represent an art upon which thousands of us depend for a good deal that makes life a pleasure; that, as such, you are responsible for every professional act, and subject to the control of influences which lie outside of and apart from yourself. Your position, as thus defined, may be irksome, but that is your business. You are not compelled to remain in it. But while you do remain, understand that the position has its duties as well as its rights, and that anyone who is interested in the welfare of your art may call upon you to fulfil them.

The question now arises—What are the claims of music upon those who profess it?

The answer, if given in all its fulness, would carry us into the domain of impracticable theory. Personally, I have no desire to go so far. The domain in question is the home of dreamers, and of those who, not able to recognize the limits of the possible, blunder over them in imagination, and wonder why others do not follow in reality. It is a barren region, save when it creates enthusiasts whose example leavens a, mayhap, too practical and matter-of-fact world with a little of their own devotion. I am not, therefore, about to contend—though the contention would be theoretically justified—that when a man has consecrated himself to Art he should, under all circumstances, prefer its interests to his own, and at its command refuse to do or insist upon doing any and everything without reference to personal advantage or loss. What would be the use of preaching such a doctrine, especially now, when the struggle of life is fierce, and every man has to fight, like Hal-o'-the-Wynd, "for his own hand" against a thousand who, if not his personal enemies, would walk over his body to their own goal with the utmost complacency? It would be vain and foolish to look for absolute devotion, and he who would discuss this subject practically, must dismiss the idea. But something is possible, and the realization of it lies in the duty of promoting by every available means the welfare of art, while doing all that circumstances permit to avoid compromising its interests. No artist will object to this as a rule of conduct. Let us see how far its application to certain every-day experiences may be satisfactory.



A is an artist to whom B brings a trumpery song at which, under ordinary conditions, A would not look twice. But B says: "It suits your voice, sing it everywhere for so long a time, and you shall have so much for every copy sold." A jumps at the bait, and forth with goes among the public lending the influence of his name and gifts to the recommendation of rubbish. Here, in parenthesis, let it be understood that I am not attacking what is usually called the "royalty system." That system may or may not be a bad one, but it is certain that "royalty songs" are not trash of necessity. B might have taken to A a masterpiece, in which case, though it involve the "royalty system," my present argument would not apply. But assuming the conditions laid down above, what rag of defence has A against the charge of sacrificing his art for paltry gain? It is a case of disloyalty, and more—it is a case like that of a soldier who turns against his own colors the weapons given to him for their defence.

"Treason doth never prosper. What's the reason? Why, when it prospers, none dare call it treason."

Let me prove old Sir John Harrington wrong for once, by stigmatizing the practice under review as treason in its worst form.

C is an artist whose help is necessary to the production of a work the influence of which cannot be too greatly strengthened. But the composer has not written with a view to the claims founded by C upon his artistic rank. There are not songs enough, or they come too early or too late, or they are not adapted to show the best points in his voice. C thereupon declines the engagement, and leaves it to a man of humbler pretensions as well as smaller means. The result is damage to the work. Here the first consideration was personal advantage, not duty to art. But something more than this was involved, viz.—inability to recognize the fact that the dignity which the pursuit of art reflects is a truer and nobler thing than that which springs from personal rank and fame. The greatest artist—happily the annals of music illustrate this over and over again—may, without the smallest loss of greatness, minister in a humble capacity. "Those also serve" says Milton, speaking of the angels, "who only stand and wait." So before the majesty of high art all its followers are equal, though by comparison amongst themselves there are ranks and orders. Could this exalted truth be more generally recognized we should see less of a contemptible self-assertion which assumes that individual aggrandizement is the ultimate end, and the gratification of individual feeling the highest good of artistic life. There is nothing more pitiful or more hopeless than the condition of one who is given over to such a form of selfishness. An old theologian has said: "Thou must be emptied of self before thou canst be filled with the Spirit," and, in like manner, until the follower of art is emptied of self he cannot be an artist. He is the Iscariot among disciples, and thinks more of dipping his hand into the store-bag than of furthering the cause which unites his companions.

D is an artist who scorns to make money by playing or singing bad music, and is indifferent about asserting his precedence over others, but suffers nevertheless from a consuming ambition. He wants to make a noise in the world; to be talked of in society; to see long articles concerning himself in the public journals, and to find his name the battle-cry of a musical faction. To this end he works by cultivating what is called individuality. He has odd ways in public, which simple souls connect with genius in the blundering fashion of people who speculate upon what they know nothing at all about. Perhaps he wears long hair, and achieves the abstracted look of a man able to see more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of common folk. Perhaps he has eccentric notions of dress, or he may assume an air of *abandon* on the platform as of one "possessed," or he may, as is

most in fashion now-a-days, sacrifice the music he performs to "new readings" such as a gullible public takes in with very long ears and much asinine wonder. It is hard to define what a musician afflicted in this mode may or may not do, so wide is the field in which, by a mysterious dispensation of liberty, folly or conceit, or—worst of all—deliberate calculation, disports itself. There are many such people calling themselves artists, and some of them are men who, but for their weakness on this point, would be artists in deed and in truth. Their case is the worst of all. He whose object is gain can, at least, be understood. Money is power; the world worships it; and the desire for wealth is a perfectly intelligible, if vulgar, weakness. He, again, who stands up for his dignity to the disregard of art, enjoys a natural, though unworthy, triumph. But the man who uses ability and opportunity to make art the means of a sensational display intended solely for his own glorification—he is an offender *sui generis*; one who sins against light, and is beyond the reach of forgiveness. As well as living to himself, art, as he can make it, lives for him too, and is kept in his stable, that at any moment he may bestride it and witch a foolish world with most ignoble horsemanship.

Other examples might be brought forward, but the limits of this paper are reached, and those already cited will suggest many more to every observant mind. And now the question may be asked *Cui bono*? What can come of this preachment against the wind, of which every man can hear the sound and that is all? Well, that is exactly what I don't know. But an old book of wisdom says, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days." I remember, when a boy, putting the advice to a literal test, and wasting a slice of excellent provender. Nevertheless, I have faith in it still as a figure, and it may be that the words now drawing to a close will nourish somewhere or other the seed out of which a true artist springs, helping it to bring forth the fruit of high aims, noble devotion, unselfish feeling, everything, in point of fact, that distinguishes an artist from a mere trader upon art.

### Obituary.

CHARLES EDWARD HORSLEY. The *American Art Journal* contains the following notice of the sudden death of one of the ripest and soundest of English musicians, who came to this country about four years ago, and who contributed to our own Journal, at that time, a series of very interesting personal reminiscences of Mendelssohn.

It becomes our painful duty to record the death of this talented musician and composer, which took place on Monday, Feb. 28th, rather unexpectedly, the immediate cause being heart disease. Mr. Horsley came from a musical race, his father being the celebrated glee composer, H. Wm. Horsley. He was born in London, Dec. 17, 1825, and studied in Germany under Mendelssohn, Hauptmann, and Spohr; with the former he was on the most intimate terms of friendship. Among Mr. Horsley's many successful works, we may mention his oratorios of *Joseph and David*; cantatas: *Comus*, and *Wedding Cantata*, in addition to many pieces of church music, both vocal and instrumental, symphonies, etc. Mr. Horsley arrived in America in 1872, and has been the organist and choir master of St. John's Chapel, in addition to directing that once splendid choral organization, founded by Dr. James Pech, the Church Music Association, during the latter period of its existence. Mr. Horsley's last work was performed at the Martha Washington Reception on the 22d inst., and is entitled *The Patriot Flag*, being written for solo and chorus, and a highly effective composition. He had countless warm friends in musical circles who will deeply mourn his early decease.

—We had just read the melancholy news of Mr. Horsley's death, when the London *Figaro*, of Feb. 23, came to hand, in which we find the following:

I wonder that none of our entrepreneurs ever think of producing some of the works of Charles Horsley. At the time that shamefully neglected composer worked in England, English music held a very different position in popular estimation from that which it does now. Ten years ago he went to Australia, where his name, and

that of his cantata, "Euterpe," written for the Town Hall, Melbourne, are household words. He is now earning his bread in America, a country which, I regret to say, has hitherto looked far more favorably upon English musicians than we have ourselves done. The time has gone by when foreigners who happened to be patronized by royalty and aristocracy could take the food from the mouths of our own men of talent, and the cry is loud for good English music. Why, then, does not some one produce Mr. Horsley's "Comus," or "Gideon," or "Euterpe"? English musicians know their merits and choral works are now highly popular. What says Mr. Manns, or Mr. Weist Hill, who have both done a great deal for English music? The Albert Hall is still in the possession of the aristocracy, the Sacred Harmonic Society is intent upon their old repertory, and the Philharmonic Society, with its English Board of Directors, looks with scorn upon English works. But we have many choral societies in London, and dozens in the provinces, by whom English music of the true sort is in request, and if the opinion of such men as Macfarren, Smart, and Benedict be of any worth, Charles Horsley should not be forgotten, even though he be in America, waiting anxiously for an opportunity to return to his native land.

HORATIO HARRIS. The following touching tribute is to the memory of one, who, although not a musician in any professional or technical sense, was one of the truest and most liberal "friends of Music" in this community. He was a member of the Harvard Music Association, and one who could always be relied on for hearty and substantial aid in all good works in the true cause of Art, as well as of humanity.

### IN MEMORIAM.

Boston, March 3, 1876.

To the Editor of the *Saturday Evening Gazette*:

As you suggested, I will write some incidents of my business and social intercourse with our dear friend, Horatio Harris, now extending back nearly forty years. In 1838 he, as clerk of the auctioneers, and I of the importers, often stood together on Commercial Wharf, delivering Malaga fruit which had been sold. He was a healthy, energetic boy, courteous to his superiors, and firm, but quiet, civil, and determined, with the truckmen, who in those days were our roughest population. He showed the future man by his systematic mode of bringing order out of what almost seemed chaos. At night, although thousands of packages had been received from the vessel and delivered to very many parties, all our accounts agreed, to a package. He early became his employers' partner, and by the senior's death took his place, while he was still a young man, and later formed the firm, with which he retained his connection. As you know, his attention has of late years been directed to other work, and I need hardly dwell upon, what everyone who knew him easily saw in his business life, a well-balanced mind, always cheerful, (his laugh was a benison), but never elated when business was most prosperous, and as free from despondency during the crises which periodically visited us. In 1857, I well remember that his duties were very heavy, and how well he carried them, always calm and cheerful, and doing much to help others bear their too heavy loads. But it was the social side of his life which always charmed me. So soon as his work was finished, he went to his beautiful place at Roxbury, wholly the work of his good taste, and, as we often walked about the grounds, he would point out the finished or projected improvements. He was a lover of nature, and also a natural musician; when we went into the house, he would sit at his piano and play whole airs from opera or selections from overture and symphony which we had before heard when together. There was much truth in what some one once said when hearing him play: "What is the use of playing the piano and practising for weeks over what Mr. Harris will play after once hearing?" He had the musical gift of remembering and repeating almost anything he had heard. He enjoyed nature's beauties keenly, and never seemed happier than among his flowers, or sauntering through his greenhouse. He lived south of me, and for years stopped each morning on his way to Boston. As we drove in together he would often say that if I had a moment to spare he would like to go and see some pretty place which was being improved.

This strong business man had a tender heart, and one susceptible to all that was beautiful. His charities were most ample, and scores of young persons of either sex were helped by him in their musical education, while many were enabled through his assistance to procure their musical instruments. He was sorely tried, and more than once, but bore his griefs heroically. His eldest son died at the moment when his father had carefully educated him to help him with his business cares; while after continued watching, days and nights, over a sick bed, another son was saved, but, alas! with what deprivation! The affliction of this young man, however, seemed to open wider his own soul, for seldom upon entering the house did I miss the cheery voice or laugh, or else sweet music came from the piano. He inherited his father's musical talent. Our friend has gone, his

work well done, and to us of his age he seems to have finished his share here, although taken away in the fullness of his strength. He has gone to render his account of the talents lent him, and which he neither buried nor misused. God rest his soul! We will all keep his memory green, and remember his many good deeds. J. S.

**RUBINSTEIN'S CONCERTO IN G.** Here is what the London *Academy* says of it. What words would it have found for another Rubinstein Concerto which bored a Boston audience in a recent concert of Theodore Thomas!

There are few more thoroughly disappointing composers than the great Russian pianist. That he possesses considerable talent and is by no means destitute of inventive power it would be most unjust to deny; yet his larger works never, as a whole, create a satisfactory impression. There are two reasons for this; first that the composer in his anxiety to produce something entirely original occasionally succeeds in producing something abominably and hideously ugly; and secondly (and much more frequently) that he seems to be almost wholly destitute of the faculty of self-criticism. The chief themes of his movements are of an enervated character, played on Saturday, pleasing enough; but, having selected them, one is almost tempted to imagine that Rubinstein leaves the rest of the movement to take care of itself, and literally puts down on paper the first notes that occur to him. Hence his thematic developments, on the proper management of which the organic unity of the whole movement very largely depends, are too often diffuse, wild, and incoherent; side by side with passages of true power and beauty we find pages of the most dreary "padding;" and, just as the composer has enlisted the hearer's sympathies by some beautiful phrase, he flies off at a tangent, and raves and storms wildly over the orchestra, till the interest previously excited is succeeded by a feeling of weariness, if not of disgust. The third concerto is an instance of this. There is not one of the three movements of which it consists that does not contain good ideas, which, with judicious treatment, might have been worked into a most excellent whole; this is especially the case with the finale, the themes of which are really attractive. But in each movement there is so much that is vague and incoherent, so much mere straining after effect, that listening to the whole work was a severe trial to the patience. I must in justice add that I am recording my impressions on a first hearing, as the work was previously unknown to me; and I was told that if I heard it half-a-dozen times I should think very differently of it. It may be so; I will merely say that, if conversion is only to be purchased at such a cost, I prefer to remain in my present faith.

### Liszt's Oratorio "Christus."

[From the New York Sun, Feb. 28.]

At their concert last evening, the Oratorio Society of New York, under Dr. Damrosch's direction, performed two works which were in as sharp contrast to each other as two musical compositions could very well be.

The first was a portion of Liszt's Christmas oratorio "Christus," the latter Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night."

Liszt's composition was partly for orchestra alone and partly for chorus with accompaniment of orchestra and organ. It related to the story of Christ's birth, and consisted of an introduction, a pastorate, and annunciation (chorus), the Latin hymn "Stabat Mater speciosa," the song of the Shepherds at the Cradle, and the March of the Kings of the East, the last two numbers being for orchestra.

Here certainly was an opportunity for some devotional writing if any devotion Liszt had in him that he was capable of expressing through the medium of music. Apparently he had none, for certainly he expressed none. In fact he masquerades with religion as with other things. It is mere matter of costuming as much as his Abbe's dress is, and the impression given by so much of the work as was heard last evening (for happily only one-third of it was given) was of emptiness of thought striving for little worthless effects and general insincerity of purpose. It was long and tedious, unrelieved by any indication of genius or by any phrase of genuine and original melody. The attention of the hearer goes wandering wearily over the chaos of sound that Liszt conjures up, seeking, like the dove, for some olive branch of melody, but searching in vain. Liszt is a man who pieces together the fragments of musical expression, here a bit for the oboe, there a little phrase for the violinello, occasionally a tinkle from the harp. When he wishes to express a broad and grand thought, he becomes simply noisy. Everything is patch-work—a confused medley of tones and phrases, without symmetry, relation, logical development, or sequence. And yet it is all put together with the consummate skill of a man who understands perfectly the whole technique of music, the art of effect, the capabilities of every instrument, and how to combine the instruments so as to produce all manner of startling curiosities, and quaint effects.

If heaven to all those talents had been pleased to add a spark of true genius and a little nobility and sincerity of life and purpose, we might have had a great composer in Liszt. As it is, we have only this strange compound of talent and charity, who, when he tires of the good things of this world and of the adulation with which he is surfeited, turns his mind to dressing up some of his fancies in an ecclesiastical garb, and is pleased to believe that in his "Christus" he is giving to the world a devotional work.

After his insincerity the downright earnest, bright music of Mendelssohn's Walpurgis night came like a true refreshment.

The Oratorio Society rendered both the works in a praiseworthy manner, the latter naturally with more spirit and accuracy than the former.

At their next concert they sing Schumann's Paradise and the Peri.

### Bach's Work in Leipzig.\*

Bach now became choir-master of the Thomas School, and musical director of the two principal churches at Leipzig, St. Nicholas and St. Thomas, as well as of the two smaller ones, St. Peter's and the new church. He undertook this position in the year 1723, at the age of thirty-eight, and remained there twenty-seven years, till his death.

Leipzig, one of the great centres of German commerce, full of life and movement, as Goethe says "a miniature Paris, that formed its own people," was also one of the principal seats of scientific learning. The university and its professors enjoyed a wide reputation. The city itself, though subject to the elector of Saxony, was very independent in the management of its internal affairs, and had an almost republican constitution. The proud independence of its whole character stamped itself on every phase of its life. It was therefore natural that a man of Bach's genius and lofty aims should develop his full powers in such an atmosphere.

Besides directing the music in the four churches we have named, it was Bach's duty to teach the Thomas scholars music. A certain number of these boys were provided by legacies with food and lodging, in consideration of which they were required to perform the church music, attend funerals, and go through the streets singing three times a week, on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, for which the owners of the houses gave them some money towards their maintenance.

The convent of St. Thomas, out of which the school had grown, had such an "Alumnus" or charity school, the pupils of which had been required to sing at religious ceremonies. When the magistracy of Leipzig took possession of the convent, A.D. 1531, this custom was retained. Luther had done away with all that was formal and mechanical in the Roman Catholic ritual, but he wished music to be preserved in the Church, and had, therefore, urged that singing should be taught in schools, and "would not look at a schoolmaster who could not sing." Thus the musical functions of the Alumnus were substantially connected with the constitution of the Thomas School, and were quite compatible with its importance as a seat of general learning.

The choir which Bach had to lead, was thus under his own constant instruction and superintendence, and he could now control the singing in church, which he had never been able to do in the places where it was led by the ordinary school children, without any regular instruction or direction. How particular the governors of the school were as to having a full, well-ordered choir, appears from the rules of the institution, A.D. 1723, chapters vi. and vii., by which the admission of boys to the benefits of the institution, and their continuance in the same, were made dependent on their musical powers, and they were required to stay from five to six years that the music might not suffer from too frequent changes.

The number of charity children, or "Alumni," as they were called, amounted to twenty-two in the year 1552, and had risen at the time of Bach's appointment to fifty-five. They were provided with dinners, suppers, and lodging in the school-house, and received allowances of money besides.

The singing-school of St. Thomas had had an excellent succession of masters for a long time, and under them the institution had risen to such a height of excellence that many boys out of foreign, especially Protestant, countries—Prussia, Hungary, Poland, Denmark, and Sweden—came there.

Bach's duties here included the inspection of the school every third week (the rector, or head-master, and con-rector, or assistant-master, taking their turns the other two weeks), which occupied him from 5 A.M. in summer, and from 6 A.M. in winter.

\*FROM THE LIFE OF J. SEBASTIAN BACH. An Abridged Translation from the German of C. H. BITTER, by JANE E. KAT-SHUTTLEWORTH, London, 1873.

Besides this he taught the first class music (the second class was taught under his directions by an inferior master), arranged how the singing was to be performed at every service in the four churches already mentioned, dividing his pupils so as to form choirs in each of them, and went with them to every funeral, superintending the singing of the funeral hymns introduced by Luther. If at a funeral any one wished a cantata or motet to be sung instead of the ordinary hymns, he might not consent in every case, but only if the person to be buried was of distinguished position or a benefactor of the church or schools. He was to keep an inventory of the music and instruments, and see to their being well taken care of; also to superintend the organists and other musicians of the two principal churches, and to see that the boys wasted no time when they went in procession through the town, so that they might lose none of their studies.

It is difficult to state with precision what pay Bach received at Leipzig, as he derived most of his income from occasional sources. He had lodging and firewood free, and his fixed salary was 87 thalers 12 groschen (about £13) per annum, besides 16 scheffel of corn—13 thalers 3 groschen (about £2) for wood and candles, and 1 thaler 8 groschen (8s. 10d.) interest on a legacy. The rest of the income was made up by fees from 1 thaler (3 shillings) upwards, for the performances of the choir at funerals, weddings, concerts, etc. He was thus much better off than he had ever been before; he had not enough to grow rich, but quite sufficient to live very comfortably, even with his large family, in those days when provisions were cheap.

Before entering on his office he was required to sign a paper with fourteen conditions, one of which bound him not to make the music in church too long, and not "operatic," but rather "such as to encourage the hearers to devotion."

There was music on alternate Sundays at the two principal churches under Bach's direction, and the order of services in them was as follows:—

On Sunday, early service at 6.30 A.M., at which the "horæ," retained from the Roman Catholic church, were sung.

Full service at 7.30 as follows:—

- (1) A prelude.
- (2) A motet or anthem on festivals.
- (3) Kyrie.
- (4) Gloria in excelsis.
- (5) Prelude.
- (6) The Lord be with you.
- (7) A prelude and hymn.
- (8) The epistle.
- (9) Prelude and hymn.
- (10) The gospel.
- (11) Prelude and creed.
- (12) Sermon and hymn.
- (13) Prayer and announcements.
- (14) Prelude and hymn.
- (15) Communion.
- (16) Offertory and blessing.
- (17) Closing hymn.

Noonday service at 11.30 A.M.:—

- (1) Prelude.
- (2) Motet, or, on feast days, Cantata.
- (3) Prelude and hymn.
- (4) Psalm and prayers.
- (5) Prelude and hymn.
- (6) Sermon and hymn.
- (7) Prayers.
- (8) Prelude and hymn.
- (9) Offertory and blessing.
- (10) Hymn.

Afternoon service began at 1.30 P.M., and after that, about 4 P.M., came christenings and weddings.

Besides this there was a short service every day of the week at each of the churches, in the morning at the one, and in the afternoon at the other alternately, and the choristers of the Thomas School sang at each.

Bach composed many of the motets, preludes, cantatas, etc., for these services himself. He worked hard, but he had the satisfaction of seeing the good result of his labors, and he much enjoyed playing on the great organ of St. Thomas's Church, an instrument which was really worthy of so great a master. There were two organs in this church, a large and a small one; both were used when the *Matthäus Passion* was performed A.D. 1729.

In the midst of his manifold occupations Bach still found time to study the works of his contemporaries. Copies exist in his handwriting of a Mass by Palestrina, parts of two Masses by Lotti, a Magnificat by Caldara, and one by Zelenka, an Oratorio by Handel, a *Passionsmusik* by Kaiser, and one by



Graun, a short Mass by Wilderer, sixteen Cantatas by J. Ludwig Bach, a Concerto by Telemann, and several pieces for the piano by W. Friedemann Bach.

The works he composed at Leipzig are perfect specimens of his riper style. One of their characteristics is the perfection of each part as an independent melody, while at the same time all the parts together make a perfect harmony. For instance, in his double choruses with instrumental accompaniment each voice has a melodious part to sing, each chorus is beautiful by itself, the accompaniment alone is a perfect piece of music, and the whole together constitutes a grand harmony.

The original manuscripts of his works are full of corrections and alterations, showing that their production cost him no small amount of labor.

The directors who preceded Bach at Leipzig used to choose the cantatas or motets to be sung in the churches quite arbitrarily, without any regard to their connection with the rest of the service. But Bach felt that, unless these elaborate pieces of music were really made a means of edification, they were mere intellectual pastimes, suitable for a concert, but an interruption to divine worship; and he thought that they could best edify the congregation if their subject were the themes to which attention was specially directed in the service and sermon of the day. He therefore made it a rule to ascertain from the clergymen of the four churches the texts of the sermons for the following Sunday, and to choose Cantatas on the same or corresponding texts. As most of the clergy were in the habit of preaching on the gospel of the day the service thus became a harmonious whole, and the attention of the congregation was not divided between a variety of subjects. The clergyman of highest standing at Leipzig, Superintendent Deyling, a preacher of great eloquence and theological learning, co-operated heartily with Bach in this scheme. A series of Cantatas\* for every Sunday and festival for five years—about 380 in all—was composed by Bach, chiefly during the first years of his stay at Leipzig. Unfortunately many of these are lost, but 186 for particular days, and 32 without any days specified, still remain. Their music is so completely in character with the subject of the words as to form a perfect exposition of the text. In some the orchestral introductions and accompaniments are made illustrative of the scene of the text, as for instance in one on Christ's appearing to his disciples in the evening after his resurrection, the introduction is of a soft calming character, representing the peacefulness of evening and of the whole scene. Another, on the text, "Like as the rain and snow fall from heaven," is introduced by a symphony in which the sound of gently falling rain is imitated. In others the instrumental parts and some of the voices express the feelings excited by meditation on the words. Sometimes, in the midst of a chorus in which the words of the text are repeated and as it were commented on, a single voice, with the accompaniment of a few instruments, breaks off into some well known hymn in a similar strain of thought or feeling.

The form of the Cantata was generally as follows:—

An orchestral introduction;

A chorus, usually the most impressive part of the whole, intended to tune the minds of the hearers to the spirit of the text;

Recitations and solo airs, models of musical painting, more calculated to occupy the intellect and illustrate the meaning of the words than to catch the ear by their melody;

Lastly, a chorale, or hymn tune in four parts, with elaborate instrumental accompaniment.

But Bach frequently departed from this general order of succession; in some cantatas he begins with a chorale, in others with a recitative or solo air, etc.

The words are adaptations of texts of scripture and of hymns; the scripture texts often altered so as to suit the music; in many, a rhyming comment, generally abstract and dogmatical, with awkward rhymes and unpoetical forms of expression, is sung to the airs; and as Bach's music is generally a faithful exposition of the words, the character of these rhymes is one reason why many of his airs sound unmelodious to modern ears.

The independence of the orchestral accompaniment from the singing, and of the part of each instrument from the others, makes this music extremely difficult to play. The introductions to the can-

tatas, often important enough to deserve the name of symphonies, were among the earliest pieces written for purely orchestral performance.

It is curious to remember that the sacred cantatas were not composed for universal fame or for a musical public, but for the use of congregations who probably looked on them as a necessary part of the service, and thought little about the merits of their composition. In those days art criticism was in its infancy, and they were scarcely noticed beyond the walls of Leipzig till after the composer's death.

Some critics, Zelter, Von Winterfeld, and others, have found fault with the *operative* character of Bach's cantatas, and their unfitness for Divine service. It is true there are few choirs or orchestras capable of performing them without much study, and the congregation joins in no part of them except in the chorales; perhaps also there are few congregations sufficiently musical to appreciate them. But the real difference between sacred and secular music lies in the frame of mind produced in the hearers; and Bach's cantatas, whether performed in a church or a concert hall—with or without sacred words—inspire purely devotional feelings; whereas there is much music set to solemn words and performed in churches that leaves the hearers worldly, morbid, or frivolous. Bach borrowed some forms from the newest and best *operative* compositions of his time, as he was perfectly justified in doing; for art makes progress by each artist availing himself of the discoveries and inventions of his predecessors, in other branches as well as his own. The mere use of forms which were also used in the opera could not make the spirit of his music theatrical.

By other critics, on the contrary, Bach has been called a "pietist." He was in truth a sincere Christian; and his deep religious feeling is shown throughout his life. He was a zealous Lutheran; his healthy mind was not troubled with doubts, but he had not, like so many, passively remained in the church in which he was brought up; he had made its creed his own by faithful study and mature reflection; had embraced it with his understanding, and impressed it on his heart, and his life was shaped in conformity to it. But with all this he was very unlike the so-called Pietists.

Akin to Bach's attachment to the Lutheran Church was his loyalty to its founder. When he made a chorale of Luther's the groundwork of one of his cantatas, he altered not a note of the old Reformer's composition, but only enriched it by varying instrumental and vocal accompaniments.

Besides the Cantatas, eighteen Motets by Bach exist. He composed at least ten more, as we know from old catalogues, but they have been lost. In 1798, when Mozart visited Leipzig, Doles, then musical director of the Thomas School, played one of Bach's motets, "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied." Mozart was enchanted with it, asked to see more motets by the composer, and spent some hours looking through them.

Bach also wrote several secular pieces during his first years at Leipzig; a cantata for the birthday of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfeld, afterwards used on the respective birthdays of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar and the King of Saxony; another for the birthday of the Princess Charlotte Friederike, who had just married his former patron and friend, Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen; and all the music, a cantata and other pieces, performed when King Frederick Augustus visited Leipzig in 1727.

The next occasion for which he wrote was a sad one, a solemn service to the memory of Queen Christine Eberhardine, who died on the 5th September, 1727, at her castle at Pretzsch, whither she had retired after having declined to renounce the Lutheran faith for the sake of the Polish crown. She was beloved and respected throughout Saxony for this act of devotion to her church, and for her many other virtues.

Almost all Bach's pupils at Leipzig became excellent organists, and have no doubt helped to spread his improved style of church music throughout Germany. He was very particular about touch and fingering, and the position of the hand in playing, and made his pupils practise five-finger exercises for several months before he would allow them to play anything else. If they grew tired of this after a few months, he composed easy pieces, equally intended to exercise the fingers, for them. The six easy preludes and fifteen inventions mentioned in Chapter V. were composed for this purpose.

He would not teach any to compose who did not show signs of talent, or the power of thinking musical thoughts.

Among his most distinguished pupils, besides his three sons and his son-in-law, Johann Christoph

Altnikol, organist at Naumburg, were the following:—

J. Ludwig Krebs, son of his Weimar pupil, J. Tobias Krebs, who studied under him nine years, and became one of the best organists and composers of his time. Bach himself says of him, "I have only caught one *craw-fish* (Krebs) in my stream (Bach)."

J. Friedrich Doles, already mentioned as musical director at the Thomas School at the time of Mozart's visit.

J. Friedrich Agricola, pianist and composer at the court of Frederick the Great, and Graun's successor as conductor of the orchestra at Berlin.

Carl Friedrich Abel, a celebrated performer on the *viola di gamba* at the court of Queen Charlotte in England.

J. Schneider, afterwards organist at St. Nicholas, Leipzig; said to have played the best preludes ever heard in that town next to Bach's.

J. Philip Kirnberger, the best musical theorist of the eighteenth century, author of a book on Bach's method of teaching, and theory of composition, entitled, "Kunst des reinen Satzes."

J. Christian Kittel, who made Bach's art of organ-playing known to posterity in a work entitled "Angehender praktische Organist."

Lorenz Christoph Mizler, Bach's earliest biographer, and founder of the musical society at Leipzig.

Kirnberger, when he began to take lessons of Bach, worked so hard that he fell ill of an intermittent fever, and was confined to his room eighteen weeks. In the intervals, when he was free from fever, he continued to work with extraordinary diligence, and Bach, remarking this, offered to come to his house, as it was bad for him to go out, and inconvenient to send his manuscripts backwards and forwards. Kirnberger said to his master one day he could never be grateful enough for his kindness, and the pains he took. "Say nothing about gratitude, my dear Kirnberger," Bach replied; "I am glad you wish to study music thoroughly, and it only depends on yourself to make all I have learnt your own. I ask nothing of you but the assurance that you will in time hand this small knowledge on to other good pupils, who may not be content with the ordinary *Lirum-larum*."

Besides all his duties at Leipzig, Bach was frequently sent for to examine organs at distant places, and to test the proficiency of candidates for positions as organists. His contemporaries duly valued his knowledge and his skill in playing, however they may have estimated his compositions.

It is wonderful that during these busy years Bach wrote his greatest works, the *Passionmusik*. They were finished in 1729. According to his two biographers, Mizler and Forkel, he wrote five of these works, but only two remain, the *Matthäus-Passion*, and the *Johannes-Passion*. They were primarily intended to be performed in churches, and one feature in which they differ from other oratorios is the introduction of chorales in which the congregation were intended to join.

Similar half-dramatic compositions on sacred themes had existed long before Bach's time. It had been the custom in many parts of Germany, from ancient times (as it is in some places still), to give dramatic representations of our Lord's passion in the churches in Holy Week and at Easter. In these old "*Passions-spielen*," as they were called, the chorale in which the congregation joined had always formed an important part.

The *Johannes-Passion*, or *Passion* according to St. John's Gospel, was composed first, and is the simpler of the two. Its words were arranged either by Bach himself, or under his direction, and resemble those arranged by Broeke, of Hamburg, and set to Handel's, Telemann's, Kaiser's, and Mattheson's *Passionsmusik*.

Originally the *Johannes-Passion* began with the chorale "*O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross*," which Bach afterwards transposed to the close of the first part of the *Matthäus-Passion*, when he wrote the present introductory chorus for the older work.

The *Matthäus-Passion*, or *Passion* according to St. Matthew's Gospel, is richer and fuller, and more generally admired than the other. It was first performed at afternoon service on Good Friday, 1729, at St. Thomas's Church, Leipzig, the first part before, the second after the sermon. Bach was so much in advance of his age, that this great masterpiece was merely valued by its hearers as a religious exercise, till a later generation had been educated by other great composers to understand its beauty. It was not heard in public again for one

\*What these Cantatas were could be judged by the specimen given in last Thursday's Symphony Concert.—And he composed one for every Sunday!—ED.

hundred years after its first appearance, till Mendelssohn incited the Berlin Academy to perform it on the 1st of March, 1829.

The words are partly taken from the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of St. Matthew, and from hymns, partly verses written by C. F. Henrici, commonly called Picander. The gospel narrative is interpreted by the reflections of the ideal Christian Church, forming two choruses, "The Daughter of Zion," and "The Faithful," as they are called by Picander. These perform the same part as the chorus of a Greek tragedy, following and commenting on the narrative, but Picander's words are not always poetical; in many parts they offend modern taste.

Not so the music. What has already been said of Bach's style of composition—the perfect harmonies into which a number of independent melodious parts are interwoven, the dramatic character of recitatives and airs, the independent beauty of accompaniments—applies in a higher degree to this, his greatest work.

The instrumental parts are written for two organs and a double orchestra, consisting of oboes, flutes, and stringed instruments; drums and brass instruments are excluded as being out of character with the solemnity of the subject.

The words spoken by the different persons of the sacred drama, including the Evangelist who relates the history, are given as recitatives. The parts of the Evangelist and subordinate persons are highly declamatory, with very simple accompaniments, but our Saviour's words are set to expressive melodies, still keeping the form of recitatives, with a fuller accompaniment of stringed instruments.

In the choruses representing the Jewish people, the stormy passions of the multitude are given most vividly. When we consider the quiet times in which Bach lived, and the peaceableness of the populations that surrounded him, we are struck with the powerful imagination that enabled him to paint so truly what he had never seen—the furies of an excited mob.

The impression of horror produced by these scenes is softened by the airs and choruses sung by the ideal church, the most beautiful part of the whole.

Fifteen chorales are introduced; the melody of one, "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden," is repeated five times to different words. The secondary parts, the contralto and tenor voices, are so varied as to give it a different character each time to suit the different words.

On this, his masterpiece, as on all his other works, Bach inscribed the initials S. D. G., *Soli Deo gloria*.

### Music in London.

JOACHIM AT THE MONDAY "POPS." (From the *Musical World*, Feb. 26).

In Herr Joachim, perfect mechanism and perfect intelligence go hand in hand; his reading and execution of "classical" music—and, to his credit be it said, he condescends to nothing less—are on a par. With his accustomed modesty and indifference to self display, the pieces selected for his first appearance were exclusively such as fellow-artists might take part in. He introduced no solo, though there was probably not one among the immense audience assembled who would not have been delighted to hear him give something in which he might shine unaided. He led Mendelssohn's second quintet (B flat), and Beethoven's fourth trio for stringed instruments (C minor)—in the former his associates being MM. L. Ries, Straus, Zerbini, and Piatti; in the latter, Herr Straus and Signor Piatti. He also played, with Mdlle. Marie Krebs, Beethoven's sonata for pianoforte and violin, No. 3, Op. 30 (G major). In the magnificent *adagio* of Mendelssohn's quintet Herr Joachim may, in familiar phrase, be said to have "surpassed himself." We can remember nothing more pathetic than his delivery of the opening subject, or more eloquently touching than his reading of the second theme, which shines out so brightly in contrast with what precedes it. The simple, quaint, and unaffected *scherso* was rendered in perfection; and the *Andante*, one of Mendelssohn's most impetuous and irresistible quick movements, brought out in strong relief all the fire and vivacity which Herr Joachim can put forth with such true effect when called upon. How admirably he was supported by Signor Piatti on the violoncello may be easily credited. The entire performance was irreproachable, and deserved all the enthusiastic applause bestowed upon it. That the trio in which Beethoven proved himself worthiest rival of Mozart (who died only seven years before it was composed) was equally well given it is scarcely requisite to state, or that the familiar sonata of the same composer. In the hands of Herr Joachim and his accomplished partner, Mdlle. Marie Krebs, was all that could be wished. Mdlle. Krebs chose for her solo the trying and difficult *Toccata* in C of

Robert Schumann, her facile and brilliant execution of which has more than once been recorded. Being twice called back, she played the "Träumerei"—one of those fantasy pieces which Schumann's highly endowed widow has made familiar to the English public. Two *Lieder* by Schubert, and two by Herr Brahms, were sung with great intelligence and charm by Mdlle. Sophie Lowe, who was ably accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Zerbini.

At the concert on Monday next Herr Joachim is to lead Schubert's quartet in D minor, and to perform the well-known *Chaconne*, with variations, of J. S. Bach.

THE BACH REVIVAL. Lovers of Bach's music will be pleased to learn that two performances of his great Mass in B minor, will take place at St. James's Hall, in the last week of April, and the first week of May respectively. A fine amateur chorus has had rehearsals, for a long time past at the residence of Mr. Freahe, under the direction of Herr Otto Goldschmidt, who will conduct the public concerts. Among the members of this chorus are "Jenny Lind," Florence Marshall, and other distinguished votaries of the art. The thanks of all music-lovers are due to Herr Goldschmidt, for taking the initiative in this important matter.—*Concordia*.

"St. John Passion Music" is to be given on the Fridays in Lent at the church of St. Anne's, Soho, on a plan similar to that adopted last year, namely, with a full chorus and small complete orchestra.—*The Musical Standard*.

*Concordia* states that in consequence of the illness of Dr. Stainer, the performance of Bach's "Matthew Passion" in St. Paul's Cathedral will this year be conducted by Mr. Barnby.

A PURCELL SOCIETY. On Monday last a meeting was convened at the house of the Royal Society of Musicians for the purpose of taking into consideration the desirableness of establishing a Purcell Society, with the object of publishing and performing the many works of our great English master which are still in MS. The initiative had been taken by Mr. W. H. Cummings, in response to whose call the following gentlemen assembled:—Sir, John Goss and Mr. Hopkins (who represented the old Purcell Club), Mr. Julian Marshall, Mr. Joseph Bennett, and Mr. Alfred Littleton. Letters of apology for non-attendance, and expressing sympathy with the object of the meeting, had been received by Mr. Cummings, from Sir F. Gore Osseley, Professor Macfarren, Mr. Henry Leslie, Mr. Arthur Sullivan, Dr. Stainer, Mr. Henry Smart, Mr. William Chappell, and many others. The reading of these was followed by the election of Sir John Goss to the chair—Mr. Alfred Littleton acting as secretary—and the consideration of the rules upon which the proposed Society shall be based. As the results of the deliberation will have to be formulated and submitted to an adjourned meeting, particulars respecting them would be premature. Enough, that there is reason to anticipate the establishment of a Society competent to do justice to the memory and achievements of a man whom it has been the fashion to praise without the zeal that springs from knowledge, but who is worthy of a better kind of honor.—*Concordia*, Feb. 26.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MARCH 18, 1876.

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### Concerts.

The sixth and last of THEODORE THOMAS' series of Six Symphony Concerts took place on Wednesday evening March 1. The audience was very large. The programme offered simply two great works: the *Magnificat* in D, by Bach, of which we translated an analysis by Robert Franz in our last number, and the great Schubert Symphony (of "the heavenly length") in C, so lately given in a Harvard Concert.

The *Magnificat* was heard in Boston for the first time; it had been given in this country only once before, and under the same leadership, namely at the Cincinnati Festival last Spring. The choruses were sung by the Sharland Choral Society, numbering about 300 mixed voices. The orchestral score was given as completed by Franz, including an Organ part, which was intrusted to our most competent of organists, Mr. JOHN K. PAINE. The vocal solos, divided like the choruses, into first and second Soprano, Contralto, Tenor and Bass, were sung by Mrs. H. M. SMITH, Mrs. G. H. OAKES, Mrs. E. FLORE BARRY, and Messrs. WM. J., and JOHN F.

WINCH. Here certainly were ample means for an effective and complete performance.

But the result was disappointing; the audience did not get a clear perception of the significance and beauty of the work, and it fell far short of making a profound impression. The reasons are obvious. In the first place, if we may venture an opinion, the *Magnificat* (although we have studied it enough to feel and know that it is a great work) was not precisely the fittest work to choose for the initiation of a public into the glories of this to them new world of Bach. It is, in the nature of the case, with its ecclesiastical Latin text, a more formal composition than his sacred Cantatas (as a general rule), or his Motets and Passions. Then the performance fell far short of what had been expected. It was crude, cold, constrained, uneasy; no one seemed at home in the music, or to have caught its spirit. And why? Partly no doubt from want of more rehearsal, both of soloists and chorus; partly because the solos were (for the most part) not in the hands of singers who could be said to have much of the Bach culture or the Bach feeling, or into whom that warm and quickening sun had yet penetrated more than skin deep; but more and primarily because that spirit seemed not to possess the soul of the conductor of the whole. Else how can we account for the absurdly rapid tempo at which he started the opening chorus, making the brilliant complication of its five real parts, all so florid and running in roulades, seem utterly confused,—a dazling confusion at the best? Or for the hurried movement that prevailed, almost without exception, throughout the entire work? There was no sense of repose from first to last—repose which characterizes all great Art, however animated or even impassioned, and most especially the Art of Bach. It seemed as if there were an uneasy and uncomfortable anxiety to get quickly through it and come to the Schubert Symphony. That might have found excuse in the desire to make it seem short to an untired audience; but the moment that the listeners become aware of that desire, the thing, however short, is long to them; what is not done with freedom and repose fatigues from the start. It has always seemed to us that there is but one sure law for musical tempo, which may be briefly stated thus: Every piece of music ought to be allowed to set its own time. The will of player or conductor must not try to govern it; it only grieves the spirit of the composition if you try to force it forward or to drag it back; in either case the performance is wearisome. It all rests then with the right instinct of the conductor: does the music possess him? If so, through him it beats time for itself.

There is much to be said in excuse, we understand, for the chorus itself. Under Mr. Sharland they had rehearsed the music, zealously and carefully, and at reasonable tempos; it was only when they came to the performance with orchestra that they found themselves startled out of the habitual and easy gait and forced to scramble through the best they could. Nor were their efforts altogether unsuccessful, nor undeserving credit; the wonder was that it went no worse; Some points took effect: for instance the superb, startling chord (diminished seventh) on "dispersit superbos;" and the broad and noble *Adagio* of a few bars immediately following ("mente cordis sui,") a most refreshing moment of repose for once. The final *Gloria Patri*, too, was exceedingly grand.

Of the soloists the most successful were Mrs. Barry and Mr. J. F. Winch. The former sang the beautiful Air: "Esurientes implevit," with its exquisitely delicate accompaniment of two flutes, with feeling and with grace, wanting only weight of voice for such a hall; and the latter made the Bass air: "Quia fecit mihi magna" quite effective. But



probably the numbers which most generally found favor were the *Duet for Alto and Tenor*; "Et misericordia," and the very lovely *Terzet* for two Sopranos and Alto; "Suscepit Israel." Of course the orchestra was all that could be desired.

The great Schubert Symphony was indeed superbly and most beautifully played. Fresh from the very spirited rendering by our less practised local orchestra, it was impossible not to recognize the superior precision, finish, delicacy of light and shade, and clearer, finer phrasing of the last performance. In all these respects at least it was wonderfully perfect. And yet in parts we found it less inspiring; more of the beauty than the grandeur of the work was realized. For instance in the Trio of the Scherzo we craved more of the breadth and majesty we have been wont to feel in that uplifting strain which might well serve for the swelling (Centennial) hymn of a great people. But anyhow it was a rare treat to listen to such a performance of so magnificent a work, and more than made up for what was wanting in the interpretation of the *Magnificat*.

HARVARD MUSICAL ASSOCIATION. The ninth Symphony Concert, (Thursday, March 2) offered the following programme:

1. Symphony, No. 1, in C, Op. 21. [Comp. 1800]. Beethoven  
Adagio and Allegro con brio—Andante con moto—Minuetto—Allegro vivace.
2. \*Aria, "Che pur aspiro" ("Märchen aller Arten," from Act II of "Il Seraglio," or "Helmonte e Costanza"). Miss Emma C. Thursby. Mozart
3. \*Phaeton: Poème Symphonique, Op. 30. Saint-Saëns
1. Overture to "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Mendelssohn
2. \*Songs, with Piano-forte: Schubert  
a. "Du bist die Ruh'." Schubert  
b. Nightingale's Song. Taubert  
Miss Emma C. Thursby.
3. First Movement (Allegro Maestoso), from the "Ocean" Symphony, in C, Op. 42. Rubinstein

Here was variety and piquancy enough, it must be owned; the contrasts were happy ones; and all within the sphere of beautiful and noble Art,—allowing only for some natural diversity of tastes about that brilliant and audacious novelty by the French composer who has so suddenly come almost into fashion here. By the audience at large the whole concert seemed to be remarkably well relished; there was no mistaking the frequent symptoms of delight both visible and audible.

The orchestra were in uncommonly good trim, and the Mozart-like early Symphony of Beethoven was beautifully played; Mozart-like, and also Haydn-like at times, as for example in the Trio, while in the Minuetto that precedes it the genius of the Beethoven Scherzo already peeps out. There is the same irrepressible free humor in the manner in which the Finale is begun; the violins steal up to the theme as a cat pounces upon a mouse.—The unfamiliar Aria from Mozart's fresh young love opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—so full alike of the delicious true *vis comica* and of sincere and tender passion,—he composed it while he was courting Constance Weber—is a fine one, very brilliant and spirited. The Constance of the play, faithful to her true lover, resists the advances of the Moslem prince who holds them in captivity; no tortures shall shake her; she will only tremble when she feels she is unfaithful; for a moment only she pleads for mercy, and then bursts out into a heroic strain of defiance, and welcomes the relief of death. We cannot, we confess, see much affinity between the music and the words she sings; it is mostly brilliant, difficult bravura, taxing the whole compass of the voice, and calling for great execution and expression. We were sorry that so much of the rather long orchestral introduction was cut out, though all its themes and figures occur afterwards, for the instrumentation is of Mozart's finest; besides the full orchestra there are four solo instruments in the accompaniment. Miss THURSBY's fresh, pure, sympathetic voice was at its best; the high tones (running up to D in *a2*) were pure and bird-like; the liquid runs and the staccatos were given with exquisite precision; and in the expressive passage: "By heaven thy kindness be rewarded" (sung, however, in Italian), where the voice descends in long tones to B below the staff, and suddenly glides up to G above, the intonation and the quality of tone were admirable, and so was the expression. She had caught the spirit of the piece completely; for a singer of so short experience, she already has the

style of a true artist; she evidently has the gift of quick apprehension, and an instinct for seizing the spirit and intention of a piece of music. She sang Schubert's "Du bist die Ruh',"—that exquisitely pure, serene and heavenly bit of melody, to Rückert's mystical and untranslatable little poem—with the chaste and quiet fervor and simplicity of style which it requires; and in the song by Taubert her voice revelled in the highest tones and bird-like imitations in a delightful manner, recalling Jenny Lind and Nilsson; indeed we are not sure that we have ever before heard tones quite so sweet and pure up in those highest regions of the voice. The audience were delighted.

And now for the sensation of the day, the Symphonic Poem by Saint-Saëns. It is an attempt to portray in tones the rash, calamitous adventure of Phaeton, who obtained leave for a day to drive the chariot of the Sun, his father, across the heavens. The start, the whirling, glorious motion as all goes swimmingly on for a time, the sudden freaks and plunges of the restless horses, things growing more and more exciting and desperate:—all this is vividly suggested, and in a musical point of view consistently and cleverly worked out, so as to be interesting independently of any programme. Then comes a period of rest, a gentle lapsing, as if yielding to necessity and to fatigue, with a pathetic theme as if expressive of the sympathy of one who reads the story; and then the infuriated steeds grow more and more rebellious, the excitement becomes painful, the car is evidently sinking to the earth and threatening to set the world on fire, when to cap the climax down comes Jove's own thunderbolt with a tremendous crash of drums, gong, cymbals and what not, and the piece dies to an end through a short dirgelike passage. It is extremely ingenious; the motives are wrought through with a master hand; the instrumentation is wonderful; the whole thing is full of life and vivid fancy; there are no ugly passages, to which the modern music is so prone; but it is sensuous in the highest degree and it is very French. It is not the kind of music we should like to hear too often; and we must count it at the best as a clever extravaganza, felicitous and short, with a streak of fresh, original genius in it if you please, and better than some huge "programme music" we have heard of late by Liszt, Raff, Rubinstein, etc., in that it does not attempt too much, is not elaborated and drawn out to a fatiguing length, but simply tells its story and then makes its bow; you seem to see a smile upon the face of the narrator, as if he did not take it much too seriously himself. The orchestra performance was indeed brilliant, and left nothing to be desired, unless it were a couple of harp parts, which had to be supplied by two pianos very imperfectly heard. "Phaeton" was enthusiastically applauded and had to be repeated; if that crash of gong and cymbals did it, it is a queer comment upon the musical appreciation of the public.

Mendelssohn's fairy Overture could not have been heard to better advantage than directly after such a work as "Phaeton." By contrast it came out renewed in youth and freshness; and it is seldom we have heard it more delicately and beautifully played; our only doubt was whether the fluttering fairy theme was not taken just a trifle too fast.—Rubinstein's "Ocean" Symphony made another refreshing contrast. That first movement is very vigorous and noble music, only marred now and then for an instant by a few coarse and ugly measures; it is the best part of the Symphony, the one rewarding part; and to our taste, of all the orchestral compositions we have heard by Rubinstein, it is by far the best.

HERE is the programme of the sixth THOMAS MATINEE, (March 4):

1. Symphony, No. 6, in C, Manuscript, (First time), Schubert
1. Adagio—Allegro. 2. Andante. 3. Presto (Scherzo). 4. Allegro moderato.
- Aria, "Fatima," Abu Hassan. Weber  
Miss Anna Drasdil.
- Overture, William Tell. Rossini
- Concertstück, Orchestra and Horn Quartet, Dudley Buck  
Messrs. Schmitz, Pieper, Kistenmacher and Eller.
- Aria, "O mio Fernando," Favorita. Donizetti  
Miss Anna Drasdil.
- Symphonic Poem, Op. 40, Danse Macabre. Saint-Saëns
- Introduction, } 31 Act, Lohengrin. Wagner  
Nuptial Chorus, }  
March Tempo, }

The new Schubert Symphony proved a tame and trifling affair after those great works to which we owe our chief impression of his genius. It was composed in 1818, when he was 21 years old,—ten years before the great Symphony in C, which in Mr. George Grove's list (who cites the themes of all, some of them very incomplete) is No. 9. This No. 6, was evidently written when Rossini was in the ascendant at Vienna; it is light and pretty and commonplace; Auber might have written parts of it. It is more suggestive of promenade or dinner party music than of a Symphony, being that in form and structure only. The Andante, to be sure, opens with a lovely melody, but soon grows vague and wearisome; and there is playful fancy in the Scherzo, where in you catch a hint of the real Schubert genius; but the Finale is a tame and tedious Rondo. The Symphony which Joachim arranged out of the Grand Duo, Op. 140, is worth a thousand of it. Miss DRASDIL sang the Aria by Weber very finely; but "O mio Fernando" was less well suited to her powers. The Concertstück for four horns showed the skill of the performers to advantage; but the composition, though ingeniously and learnedly constructed, did not prove very edifying.

### Opera.—Titjens as Donna Anna.

Yielding to the general desire to see and hear the great prima donna on the lyric stage, the sphere in which she has so long reigned pre-eminent in London, Manager Strakosch has made up a company of the best artists who chanced to be available at such short notice, and has given here, as in New York, a few performances. In the fortnight ending last Saturday afternoon they gave here, at the Boston Theatre, two representations of *Norma*, three of *Il Trovatore*, and one each of *La Favorita*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, and *Don Giovanni*;—truly, with the exception of the last, a very hacknied and, to a refined and earnest musical taste, uninteresting list of operas; it would seem as if it were quite time that the *Trovatore* and the *Favorita* were consigned to that oblivion that has swallowed up so many better things. But these were pieces for which the materials could be collected and the performance improvised most readily. And the great public was not squeamish; it went to hear Titjens, and it went in crowds every night. It was our lot to witness only one performance. Of the *Norma* we have copied a report, which should have appeared in our last, but by some accident was crowded out.

*Don Giovanni* is always welcome, even in an imperfect representation; Mozart's music saves it. It was in truth badly given as a whole. The part of the Don (Signor ORLANDINI) was without grace or refinement, and without charm or power of voice; there was none of the fascination or the magnetism of presence, on which the whole depends. The Leporello of Sig. BARILI was more respectable, at least in intention; but the voice was dry and feeble, and the humor forced. The Commendatore was only effective in the last scene, and poor Masetto was a dumb show and a very awkward one. But veteran BRIGNOLI, after three years abroad, comes back with the sweetness of his tenor voice not much impaired, and was welcomed warmly. He put all his best power into "Il mio tesoro," which he sang like a young man of twenty-five, with such fervor and such beauty, and such wealth of tone, that he was enthusiastically recalled and obliged to repeat it. Titjens as Donna Anna was indeed superb; in action and in song it was very near the ideal excellence that all had expected. Her voice was in better condition (it was said) than on any previous evening; there were only a few signs of fatigue or of a cold in one or two of the most exacting scenes; while in intonation it was always true. She gave all the recitative of the first scene in the noblest style of pathos; indeed we never heard the music of that part more finely realized. Nor have we ever heard her delivery of the grand recitative in which she relates the outrage, and the Aria that follows: "Or sai chi l'onore," surpassed or even equalled. And the great "Letter Aria" was sung in the purest and most finished style of art. In the masked Trio: "Proteggila il ciel," her voice was purely itself and liquid sweetness. All the intense and noble passion of the character, its womanly pride and dignity, its pathos, was consistently expressed throughout.

Miss BEAUMONT won great favor as Elvira. With a fresh, pure, well trained voice, she sang its difficult music,—including "Mi tradi," so commonly omitted, beautifully, and her action accorded well. The debutante of the evening, the beautiful Mlle. CARREMO-SAURET, in the part of Zerlina, acted with grace and spirit, and in spite of the indulgence asked for her on the ground of health, sang most of the music well, showing herself the possessor of a clear, rich, telling voice, which seems to promise a career.

Orchestra and chorus were but indifferent. Some of the finest musical scenes were spoiled or quite inadequate; for instance that where Leporello invites the statue to supper, so wonderfully beautiful when well done; and the Sextet of course; that almost never is sung and repeated; and the Quartet: "Non ti fidar" needed only a better Don Giovanni to make it a success.

CORRECTION. In our last number we were made to speak of the Cello Concerto of Saint-Saëns as "more like a Reverie, a Drama, a Rhapsody, etc., than like a Concerto." For "Drama" read *Dream*.

## Musical Hyper-Criticism.

"That was a very fine concert, but one or two false notes were made, and that spoiled the whole for me."

Such was the remark of a gentleman the other day, and I set him down at once as a hyper-critic. It is largely the fashion for those who know something of music, whose education has brought them into familiarity with compositions of high order, whose practical skill enables them to detect the inaccuracies of a performance, to ventilate their superior knowledge by proclaiming the blemishes rather than searching for the excellencies which may be discovered. Consequently, any one who is unfortunate enough to sit near such a person at any concert, be it private or public, complimentary or paid, by amateurs or by professionals, will be regaled by semi-suppressed "ohs!" and "ahs!" or an occasional whispered remark, drawing attention to the fact that the orator has perceived some defect unperceivable and incomprehensible to the "ordinary" citizen, and frequent shrugs and grimaces expressive of the extreme torture being endured by the patient sufferer in the interests of his or her beloved art, which, forsooth, is *patronized* on principle, and not by any means, you know, because any pure pleasure is derived from that particular rendering. The style of the latter is too far below the ideal standard of perfection for that.

A player is waking from the piano-forte showers of harmonious melody which hold the audience under a spell. "Just look at his hands, how he holds them! Then he accented the first note and should have emphasized the second in that measure." All who are within hearing are thus apprised of their error in supposing that they were pleased with what they heard.

"Notice that bassoon player. He misses the fifth in that arpeggio every time—the dolt!" Well, what if he does? To be sure his playing has so far fallen short of perfection, but does this fact spoil the effect of the piece, necessarily? Even the worse fault of actual discord for an instant, by some slip to which all musicians, even the best, are at any time liable—need that at once quench all of the fire waked in our souls by the genius of the composer?

"The best of a book is not the thought which it contains, but the thought which it suggests. The charm of music dwells not in the tones, but in the echo of our hearts." So writes one with large experience, as the result of close observation. Let a truly enthusiastic orator, one gifted with the soul of eloquence, come before his audience with a stirring subject, and even if an illustration fail when tested by the strict laws of rhetoric, even though his speech may not be faultlessly smooth, he arouses the assembly to the same pitch of enthusiasm with himself, and one and all are ready at once for action. They say, not "how he speaks!" but "Let us march against Philip!"

So ought it to be in the soul-language, the only one common to all nations, music.

The fault is in this, that the great desire of the time is not to be a musician, but a critic. Your true musician is of necessity a poor critic. The latter demands qualities of the head, the former of the heart. Musical appreciation finds its culmination in strong emotion; criticism holds this quality in contempt; it must rise above the possibility of being carried away by any enthusiasm, and, like the surgeon, must take the knife and coldly dissect for the benefit of others. Deliver me from a critic as a companion in the presence of fine art. The soul of the true musician catches the inspiration of the composer, and as he listens the heart responds in sympathy to every beating of his pulse, so that by means of that subtle language their feelings are, for the time being, one. It is therefore possible for any one, even in the midst of a very poor performance, to catch the ideal and be affected by that rather than by the merely material tones that pass through the sense of hearing.

I know not if I make my meaning plain. All I would say I sum up in a word; Let us be musical lovers, not critics.—*The Amphion, (Detroit).*

## Tietjens in Norma.

[Crowded out from our last number.]

The announcement of a fort-night of Opera, at the Boston Theatre, (beginning on Monday evening, Feb. 28) has been hailed with enthusiasm; and a few poor hacknied Italian pieces, indifferently presented, with one star of the first magnitude, and a company hastily got together to gratify the public

desire of witnessing that one, has been drawing crowded houses. Mlle. TERESA TIETJENS, of course, is the principal attraction, and there was great eagerness to see and hear her in the imposing rôle of Norma. We were not present, and therefore, not entirely to disappoint our readers, we will draw upon the columns of the *Advertiser* for a report which we know very well *a priori* must be essentially a true one,—at all events so far as it relates to the great prima donna.

The Boston Theatre was filled last evening with an audience which, considering both its numbers and its character, has not been equalled during the present season, and not surpassed for several years. The opera of Norma, in which Mlle. Tietjens made her operatic debut here on this occasion, has almost passed in America from the region of the hackneyed and overworn to that of the unfamiliar and forgotten. And in spite of its affluent melodiousness it is not likely to hold its own as a musical work in competition with the dramatic intensity of the modern school of writing. The "queens of song" in a former generation, however, won some of their proudest laurels in its chief character; when Madame Grisi, twenty-one years ago this winter, made her first appearance in Boston as the Druid High-priestess, it was thought that the force of her genius could no further go than in the interpretation of the part; and for a long time to come it will probably afford such opportunity to an occasional artist of commanding powers as to secure its place upon the stage. Mlle. Tietjens is such an artist; and the triumph which she achieved last night was of no common order. No appreciative person who heard Mlle. Tietjens in the concert-room could doubt her possession of dramatic ability; but few even of her warmer admirers were quite prepared, we think for the fulness, richness and splendor of her entertainment. Mlle. Tietjens proves to be a great actress,—possessing a style so large, so expressive, and so finished as to satisfy the demands of taste, imagination and feeling. Even her face, under the potent compulsion of her mind, becomes by turns beautiful and awesome, while always justly reflecting the sentiments of the situation; her action is always free, graceful and striking, and often it is magnificent and telling in the extreme. It need not be said that Mlle. Tietjens is a great dramatic singer, but the dramatic qualities of her singing had no full chance of display until her appearance in opera. Here the remarkable sympathetic quality of her noble voice is called upon, not only for its utmost, but for its most rapid, delicate and subtle manifestations; and the excellence of her mere vocalization, great as it is, dwindles into insignificance beside that wondrous property of holding and transmitting alike the faintest and the strongest shades of feeling, with unerring and magnetic skill. In her opening scene Mlle. Tietjens's voice showed some traces of wear and tear in a slight tendency to false intonation, and in "Casta Diva"—though the grace and finish of the effort were beyond praise—the artist's nearest management was acquired for the veiling or softening of certain inaccuracies in tone. As the prima donna warmed to her work, however, almost all traces of this weakness disappeared, and all through the middle and later scenes of the opera—except for a few moments during the solo and chorus just preceding the final—her voice rang out with the sweetness, certainty and power of a silver trumpet. Her delivery of her music of the terzetto, "Où di quel sei tu celtima," was especially wonderful, for the intensity of the anguish and scorn conveyed, as well as for its vocal splendor. The duo with Adalgisa, "Si fno amore," displayed the flexibility and elegance of her vocalization in their fulness; and in her last duet with Pollio her tones were surcharged with a yearning tenderness. In action the effect was, as we have said, so grand and so perfectly proportioned that it seems an injustice to the whole to select any portion for special praise. But we cannot refrain from uttering a word of strong admiration for her admirable "asides" in the first interview with Adalgisa, where she rehearses her own love experience through the lips of another; for the passionate tenderness, alternately graceful and tigerish, of her scenes of maternal love; and for the intense concentrated bitterness and scorn with which she gazes upon Pollio's open attempts to persuade Adalgisa to his will. Of the action and tone accompanying the word "tutti" when, in the frenzy of her wrath she threatens to spare no one of her foes, and of those with which, in a swift-agonized whisper, she conveys her shame to Orovoso, "Son madre," we can simply say that they were worthy of Ristori, and not unlike her in method.

The support given to Mlle. Tietjens by the company proved on the whole to be very good. The best of it was supplied by Miss Beaumont, who as Adalgisa, sang with delightful sweetness and admirable, steady accuracy and brilliancy. Miss Beaumont's acting was always elegant and appropriate, and in the most difficult scenes it was highly expressive and pleasing. The young artist's grace of person also proved peculiarly acceptable. Mr. Tom Karl, as Pollio, though not always as polished and finished in style as could be desired, on the whole acquitted himself very creditably, acting and singing with a zeal, devotion and vivacity which would have covered the faults of a much worse performer, and using his sonorous and serviceable voice in his best style. Signor Reina's intonations are never very trustworthy, but as Orovoso he was remarkably free from his usual faults of vocalization, and his ponderously vigorous style found a most suitable part for its expression. The chorus in "Norma" have but little to do, but that little, for an Italian opera chorus, was unusually well done, several of the most difficult choral numbers being capably given. The orchestra needs much training yet to bring it anywhere near to perfection, but our Mr. Maretzke's experienced direction they acquitted themselves without any fatal blunders and with a generally animated style.

The audience was very enthusiastic, and the principals were repeatedly called before the curtain. Mlle. Tietjens herself receiving some seven or eight calls.

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